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January 2, 1928

Dr. W. A. Harper
Elon College, N. C.

Dear Dr. Harper:-

I am handing you herewith a copy of Rev. James O'Kelly's pamphlet on Slavery, which you said that you would like to read. After you have read it if you care to you can have a copy made for the library, and then return same to me for my files. I also have a copy of a letter written by Rev. Edward Dromgoole to Rev. Nicholas Snethen, which confirms the most important point in the book.

Trusting that this will be of some use to you, I beg to remain

Yours very truly,

W. E. MacClenny,
Box 103, Suffolk, Va.

ESSAY ON NEGRO SLAVERY

- by -

JAMES O'KELLY

I returned, and considered all the oppressions that are done under the sun; and, behold, the tears of such as were oppressed, and they had no comfort; and on the side of the oppressors, there was power. Wherefore I praised the dead more than the living. Eccles. IV, ver. 1, 2.

Surely oppression maketh a wise man mad. Eccles. VII, 7.

Did not I weep for him that was in trouble? Was not my soul grieved for the poor? Job. XXX, 25.

O my soul, come not thou into their secrets. Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel. Gen. XLII, 6, 7.

Philadelphia:

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MDCCLXXXIX.

THE AUTHOR'S APOLOGY

A few weeks past, I received a letter from a gentleman, who had long declared himself a friend to the Methodist Brethren. In which letter I received an injunction to forbear condemning the practice of slavery unless I could draw vouchers from the Bible to prove my assertions. He also informed me that my own brethren among whom I was labouring, had acquainted him that they were willing and desirous that I would bring the contest to this issue; and moreover, if I refused so to do, they forever should believe, there was something at the bottom besides Religion! This unexpected challenge laid me under the necessity of exerting my feeble efforts with my spiritual weapons, for my justification, in exploding slavery.



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TO THE READER

So much has been said on this subject by my superiors, that from a sense of my inferiority I often have shrunk back from the challenge. Not that I looked upon it as difficult to prove the injustices of slavery, for a man of half sense can see that; but I was reluctant to become an author. Yet the word of the Lord, whenever I thought of declining, would burn like fire in my bones, and rob me of my sleep. I then set my face to seek my God in the matter, by strong cries, prayer, and fasting. Often the Almighty is pleased to confound the wise by the weak; and considering the grovelling objections of many of the people, which the first-rate men think not worth their notice, I could not tell, but a piece the language of which could cope with their low objections, might strike the right vein. I think, it is not the pride of my heart that brings me up to see the battle, or induces me to undertake to engage with Goliath: "Is there not a cause?"

SECTION I

In order to state the subject fairly, it will be necessary to examine the rise and progress of Negro Slavery, so far as it may concern us; together with many unavoidable consequences attending it.

So many worthy men of great abilities have been already employed in opening this grand abomination, that I may, and shall be, brief.

Africa was inhabited by a peaceable, hospitable people, happily stationed by the order of Heaven in a fruitful land; the climate of which was perfectly suitable to its natives, who were independent of Europe long before the discovery of America. For many centuries past the blacks in general have been without the glorious light of the gospel; but not without that light which in some degree lighteneth every man that cometh into the world; whereby they are enabled to form ideas of moral good and evil. They also discover some glimmerings of the divine law. Although their souls grovel in great darkness, yet they are able to form rules of justice and equity. This is the law written in their hearts, by which they will be judged at the awful day!

The British traded with these amicable creatures free from dread, bartering mere trifles for gold and ivory; and found them to be kind friends and useful neighbors. The folly and cruelty of the whites bring to my mind the boy and goose in the fable. The goose laid a golden egg every day, but the insatiable thirst for gold, could not be allayed by so gradual an income. His eye was evil against his friendly creature, and his callous heart refused to relent at her cries. He ripped her up, and so too late discovered his madness. The moral is obvious.

For an account of the manner in which slaves were at first procured, I refer to Mr. Wesley's "Thoughts on Slavery"; likewise to Mr. Clarksib's "Essay on Slavery". The blacks were a people averse to war; as is common to people in hot climates. Slaves are procured by the following measures: the poor innocent people would come on board by an invitation, then the Christians would hoist sail, and

carry them away. Others are seized and dragged on board, or taken by the force of arms, others (especially the poor people's children) are stolen from the roads, or whilst they are at play, or engaged in their business, viz. that of keeping the birds from destroying their grain; from thence they are marched away, never to see their parents more.

Historians inform us that about the year 1551, the British introduced a trade with Africa for gold and elephants' teeth; but finding the inhabitants defenceless and ignorant, the eye of the Christians became evil against their neighbors. An avaricious principle took root in their hearts - and soon had its desired influence on their practices and the thankful trade began. After the example of the Portuguese, firearms and Spirituous liquors were then introduced. War, confusion, firebrands, arrows, - and death spread misery and ruin among the poor Africans. Their tender feelings were often effaced, and instead thereof, malice, hatred, revenge, with every uncharitable temper against each other, so opposite to that eternal rule of love, which is an injunction on all mankind, were produced by this infernal trade. I may, therefore, with assurance say, that the heathens were ruined by the counsel - and example of Christians.

If the children of God are merciful peace-makers, these white men may be truly called the children of the devil. Thus it was that the poor blacks were set at variance. Towns were soon in flames; human blood ran like water. Several fruitful countries were depopulated! Those who were flying from the shocking storm were seized by kidnappers, and hurried away as sheep to the slaughter. Swarms of captives were haled to the ships like droves of cattle, with a final farewell to my dear native land, and all my dearest connections. I am bound to the doleful regions of slavery!" This perhaps was nearly the language of the hearts of all those that were made the subjects of this tragedy. They soon with trembling dread appear before the Christian Oppressors, who were waiting for their prey!

Christians could behold their vassals with hellish joy and scorn. Strip and search male and female! and generally in that shameful condition would drive them into the vessel, where they would be so violently crushed together, that many of them would miserably expire. Some of those wretched creatures have watched for a providential opportunity, and leaped into the friendly sea, which concealed them from the rage of the Christians; choosing strangling and death rather than the dreadful life of slavery! Yea, they have starved themselves, and taken other painful methods to emancipate themselves from the Christians.

The ships that conveyed these unhappy people could often be distinguished from other vessels by the sharks that followed them! Those voracious monsters preyed upon the poor Africans! The living are conveyed to the seasoning islands (so called) where numbers expire. Their wretched survivors are branded like horses and cattle, shamefully examined a second time, and then brought out as good, honest saleable property. The American Christian chooseth his Vassals without regard to relations, and while they cling in each other's arms, lamenting their woful situation in their mother tongue the man with a whip and an inflexible heart (though a Christian) soon breaks the tender embrace! Hardship and misery, with a spirit of bondage unto fear (both among us, as well as in the islands): is generally their lot for life, until death delivers them, and they rest from their labors. Behold and see, if ever sorrow was like their sorrow, where with the Christians afflict them!

Their situation(generally) is as follows:- The families are miserably crowded together in dirty pens, without any real family comfort, even where the husband and wife dwell together under one master their conception and birth (too commonly) are not as private as that of brutes in the forest! A slave hath not power to do those duties incumbent on him with them in sickness and distress. They are deprived of the liberty of seeking God and their souls' salvation in many instances. In a word, slavery is insufferable in its nature.

A slave is looked upon as the property of the master, who is his own legislator (as touching the slave) to curse, abuse, drive, rigorously, sell, change, give, yea, beat without restrictions! Mark, brand, and castrate him - and even when life itself is taken away, it is but very little regarded. Perhaps there may be a small stir if one is murdered, but it is nothing but a sham-inquisition! His wife and children (if slaves) are all saleable property; so that slave cannot say that even his life is his own. They see their wives and children in suffering circumstances, but have no way to relieve them! They see their bleeding backs but dare not say, "Why is this abuse?" They are torn from each other to satisfy debts, and to be parted among the favored legatees. This is tolerated by the sons of liberty, who risked their lives to deliver themselves from political bondage. The stain of the blood may, perhaps, still be found! The tears of the fathers, mothers, and widows have not yet ceased flowing. Yet the worst of slavery is tolerated with all its train of inhuman consequences! And what still serves to augment my pain, my beloved Methodist brethren approve of it, but not all. Where shall I turn mine eye from seeing of evil, or mine ears from hearing of blood! The sorrows of my heart are enlarged by hearing, and mine eye affecteth my soul, in beholding the sorrowful scenes that have lately fallen within my province.

On the Lord's day in the evening, as I was walking and meditating, I saw a man slave sitting along with a book in his hand, who appeared to be in deep distress; I drew near to him, and asked the cause of his trouble. With a deep sigh, he gave me the instances of the following relation:

"My dear wife and all my children are removed from me towards the South, and I shall see them no more, and what has augmented my pain is, a verbal sentence to me from her to love her till I die, as she would me - and that she would never have another man. Formerly, I was much engaged for the salvation of my soul, but now I think I shall be overcome so as to destroy body and soul together! A woman slave in Charlotte County, Virginia, whose husband was removed to Georgia, so regretted his loss that had it not been for the kind providence of the Almighty, through the

through the activity of her young mistress she would have ended her wretched life with a halter!

A poor slave a few months past, lost his wife and children who were sold as so many cattle to discharge a debt. He pined away to a mere skeleton, and gave up the ghost! O husbands, who have tender wives and precious children, can you acquiesce with a law that tolerates a practice so inhuman, which enslaves their natural liberty as to the common air? You are constrained inwardly to acknowledge, this not altogether first and equitable, but necessity calls, and it must be so now; I wish they had never been brought here, but I see no better way for them at present.

In this miserable excuse, the slave holder sets his foot. I saw a slave near Haw River, who was lamenting the loss of a wife and seven children who were then on their way to South Carolina. His grief appeared to me to be intolerable, too heavy to be born without divine assistance, which I trust he had. An addition to his grief was a message he had received of her sorrow on the road, that it was so great that they were obliged to carry her in the wagon. I endeavored to comfort him, with the pleasures of the other world and religion. Now, reader, put thy soul (only of reflection) in his soul's place, and try the enormous weight!

A few days ago, an unlucky slave, who returned home rather later than his time was met by an upstart Overseer, and killed upon the path, as every concurring circumstance declared. Yet Christians plead for the law of slavery; if I dare call, it a law!

A master who drank to excess, one morning lately, took his man-slave and hoisted and weighed him by a tobacco beam fixed between his legs, another stand-on the beam to increase the pain; beat, cut, and lashed him, till the blood poured down in streams! The slave begged for mercy but in vain; then spake in a soft manner to the tyrant saying: "Master, you have killed me." He then lifted up his eyes to heaven and expired. Those murderers are still spared, and slavery tolerated in our Free United States! The land is a mere Aeldrama, the earth and all we possess is stained with blood. Dear Zion too, is built up with blood. These poor outcasts of men

have no kind law to protect them from abuse of every kind, or to allow them some small pittance for a life of hard labor. Do not call a few rags and coarse bread hire. Yea, life itself is not protected as it ought to be. A white man's character is regarded more than the life of a slave! This is but a very short narrative of the miserable consequences of slavery.

We now proceed to inquire whether the motives which introduced slavery, were from the lust of the flesh or the divine impulses of the Holy Ghost. The spirit of God works tender-heartedness, bowers of mercy, and love, with the fruits thereof. Love is the fulfilling of the law: it is the very basis of the Christian Religion, taught by the eternal Son of God. Our Lord gives it as his commandment, that we should love one another. This is the charity that seeketh not her own, but is kind. Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ. We are an enlightened people, and therefore God requireth us to do justice and to love mercy. Micah - 6. The works of the Flesh are manifest in this grand abomination, from the rise thereof to this present period. Ask your consciences, why you keep slaves? Canot I answer in behalf of thy bribed conscience: "for the sake of ease, honor and self-interest."

The flesh lusteth to envy. Be ye well assured that slavery is a work of the flesh, assisted by the devil; a mystery of iniquity, that works like witch craft to darken your understanding, and harden your hearts against conviction and will ye live after the flesh and die? Or, through the Spirit mortify the deeds of the body and live? Beyond contradiction, great is the mystery of this grand abomination, and we must declare Slavery to be robbery, spoil, yea, cruelty, and oppression, in the strongest sense of the words: O Britain, what hast thou done? The voice of thy neighbor's blood crieth against thee! Thou mayest with our Americans be so vain as to conclude that either God hath forgotten this, or the long continuance hath worn away the evil. Or, perhaps you judge, that as the Almighty suffered it to be done, he tolerates it by a divine permission, seeing it is of so long continuance. So might the kings of Egypt have said, when they oppressed Oserae; sp amu cemtiroes. Remember, vain man, God's

command runs thus: "Touch not my people, and do my prophets no harm." Yet he suffered the Jews and Romans to beat and abuse, censure and condemn, imprison and kill his own dear people. The servant is not above his master. You will observe in St. John's vision, that he heard the souls of the martyrs beneath the altar crying: "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood upon those that dwell on the earth? Rev. VI: 9,10. Thus will you observe, the innocent blood is virtually crying out, and so are the wages which men are defrauded of. Surely, the blood of Africa is gone before to judgment.

O ye bloody overseers - ye devils incarnate, drop your whip and stand, trembling, yourselves, before God. We approve of our forefathers' steps, we build up, and garnish their sepulchres! We must shake hands with bloody robbers. Yea, we are continually robbing fathers and mothers of their children, husbands of their wives, and wives of their husbands. Surely, if my reader be a parent, he must with me (who am also a parent) agree, that if our souls were in their souls' place, and we were to see our dear Johnny, Tommy, Polly, Nancy, Patsy dragged away by our enemies into perpetual slavery, we should unite our cries to heaven, "Lord, we are oppressed, undertake for us." Melancholy and intolerable state! I am more than astonished to hear those learned gentlemen, generally known by the appellation of Clergy, standing in the pulpit, and with lifted eyes praying, "That it may please thee to have mercy upon all prisoners and captives," and the people answering, "We beseech thee to hear us, Good Lord." To which they have my amen. In the evening the Clerk stands at the door of the Lord's house of prayer, and with a loud voice proclaims, that such a gentlemen's captive is absconded and is now outlawed. Liberty is hereby given to any man to kill the said slave, for such transgression, besides reward.

Gracious Lord, who dost not let fall fire and brimstone to consume us for hypocrites, and monsters of daring wickedness, the brave sons of liberty are as indomitable as bloodhounds, crying out, "kill him, runaway negro," and never cease till dead or alive they seize the trembling delinquent, who fled from some gathering storm, for unsupportable labour. Although it is death by our decree, he would feel no more

condemned by his Maker, if he could have taken wings and fled to Africa, than a soldier who was taken prisoner and made his escape. God hath from the beginning given every man a law which we justly call "An eternal rule of right! It is holy, just and good." It defends my person, liberty, character, and all my property - my wife, children and servants. But slavery breaks every part of this law, and consequently is an eternal rule of wrong. Can anyone have the assurance to suppose, that in order to give us carnal pleasure in indulging our idleness, feeding our pride and lust - like fed horses; till we are grown as fat as Jeshurun, and kick and more grievously rebel than ever, that God would ruin and butcher so many thousands of our inoffensive fellow creatures? If there be such a being in existence as may be called a God, who was the author of this tragedy, it must be one of those gods that ascend up from the bottomless pit. Such a god I defy in the name and strength of Jesus, and proclaim eternal war against him! He is from beneath. My adorable God is from above. It is the Prince of this world, who blinds the eyes of the people, who is judged and condemned already. The God of the Christians is light, and shines into their hearts; his nature and property is ever to have mercy and to forgive.

SECTION II

Having thus investigated Slavery, as it stands on its own basis in America, it must appear to every judicious person to be a practice replete with iniquity on one side; but misery and woe on the other. We now, therefore, proceed to inquire what evil those captives have done, that they and their posterity should be forever thus abused? Many false witnesses have risen up against them, though they cannot prove what they assert; neither does their witness agree. Even a heathen thinks it an unreasonable thing to drag a prisoner to the judgment seat, and not declare his crime. Which of our ancestors have they defrauded? When did the Africans plunder our ships, or drag our dear relations into the painful regions of Slavery? In their primitive state (if I may be allowed the expression) of humanity, they were very amiable to strangers; but now, their morals are much corrupted by the precepts and

and examples of the Christians; they are now jealous of strangers but especially of Christians. The name of a Christian is as hateful and terrible to them as that of a Savage to us. If a man in Africa happens to stray from home beyond the appointed time, the wife cries out, "He is fallen into the hands of the Christians."

O my beloved brethren, ye heaven born sons and daughters of liberty, when it goes well with you and your tender babes around you, do you never remember our poor brother Joseph in confinement, who was sold from his father by his cruel brethren? "The iron is now entering into his very soul." Tears are gathering in mine eyes, while I muse upon their unfortunate condition: Poor people! Supposing the first slaves that were brought to America, had been cruel enemies to our forefathers so that the amial satisfaction we required, was 10,000 slaves, branded as cattle, and driven as oxen to cultivate our lands, we would all conclude that their crimes must be very felonious indeed, to meet with such treatment, as to be torn from all their dear relations, and that too with the loss of liberty; to pull at the hoe in the eneaiies countries, where there are so many task-masters for the field gang and task-mistresses for the spinning and washing wenches (so called) but among them all, no pay masters; unless it be the man with the whip. Were their deserts equal to their sufferings, yet might not a man of human feelings be allowed to say, "O Sirs, in the midst of delivered wrath, remember mercy."

But if all that hath been said with regard to their crimes were true, and you who hold them, should refuse to have pity, on account of the injury you had sustained by them, would father wage my inquiry, and ask, What evil have their poor children done, that they also are doomed to perpetual slavery? They are given away before they are born, having done neither good nor evil! O my brethren, these poor afflicted people do not deserve this treatment at our hands. Whatever has been done among Jews or barbarous nations, such doings do not become Christians. From the beginning it was not so. Man's authority over beasts is a donation from God, but Man's absolute authority over man is no donation from God. Indeed, the authority man hath over beasts and birds is under certain restrictions: the ox may plow and tread out

the grain, but must not be muzzled. Creatures may be used, and every creature is good, but nothing must be abused.

Everybody knows that these people never deserved such treatment at our hands. No, my brethren, it is not because they have injured you or yours, that you disobey the royal law of Christ. The motive must certainly be different; perhaps pride, avarice, idleness, or some other sinful lust, that hardens your hearts against the misfortunes and misery of your inoffensive, injured, fellowmen and women. O Children of God, have we not one father? O loving brethren, how do your hearts feel upon serious reflection? Why do you forever confer with flesh and blood? If you will hear the voice of Him that delivered from the horrible Egyptian darkness, "undo the heavy burdens, break every yoke, and set the oppressed free."

SECTION III

Having given my reader a brief account of the history of slavery, leaving out many things that have been discussed by Mr. J. Ramsay, in his essay on Slavery - who (page 3) informs us that the devil was the author of Slavery. (I expect my Christian reader, if he could believe Mr. Ramsay, that the devil was the author of Slavery, would never hold a Slave longer than till he could break his yoke!) We will now examine the doctrine of the Bible, and my reader will plainly discover how it opposes this grand abomination. That the promised Messiah was the root of David, was a fundamental article of the Hebrews' faith: to this glorious Shiloh they looked through all the types and shadows; and therefore, in some sense the gospel was preached to Abraham and the whole church of God. The inspired prophets taught and revealed the will of God to the people. They advanced the doctrine of faith in the promised Savior - informed the people of the meaning of circumcision, that it was a sign and seal, signifying the circumcision of the heart. They also taught them rules of justice and equity, to love their neighbors, and to show kindness to strangers. They also pressed holiness on them in all manner of living (because their God was holy).

The Lord God of Israel declared by the mouth of his servant, Ezekiel, that his ways were equal, but theirs unequal. Ch. 18. Pride, idleness, violence, spoil and oppression, were exclaimed against as grand abominations in the sight of God. Shall we who live in the day of perfect light irradiated by the refulgent beams of Heaven, justify these things on gospel principles? Where are our enlightened Souls, beholding Christ crucified? Where is that faith that purifies the heart, working by love? Where is the true disciple of Christ, poor in spirit, meek in heart, thirsting after holiness, crucified with Christ, dead to the world? The end of the gospel - command is universal charity - out of a pure heart and faith unfeigned. The Christian is to make straight paths for himself; in his daily exercise and devotion, his eye must be single - continually aiming at in buying or selling, eating or drinking, the glory of God. Nothing should be repugnant to the following rules: Viz. Whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report, think on these things, and square all your life thereby; fulfilling every relative duty - that of husbands, wives, parents, children, masters, and servants. Let my reader examine the glorious doctrine set before him, then look at the rise and progress of Slavery, and compare it (if he is not ashamed) with the rise and progress of the religion of Jesus Christ, and it will appear as gloomy when opposed to the gospel, as a dark cloud before the refulgent beams of the sun.

SECTION IV

Thro' divine assistance I now undertake to reconcile the seeming contradictions in the Sacred history on this important point, as I would by no means wish to break the sweet harmony that subsists between the old and new Testament. We want for this purpose endeavor to understand the difference between the dispensations - the difference between Moses, the Jewish law giver, and Jesus our lawgiver, with the government on his shoulders and the sceptre in his hand. Behold, his disciples receiving a divine nature even the mind of Christ, with a knowledge of the Father's will, which

had been hid in ages before. When God called Abraham (Gen. XII) he preached the gospel to him, saying, "In thy seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed." - Africa not excepted. Jehovah entered into a covenant with Israel about 430 years after Abraham was called, and about 1491 before Christ. Then Jehovah instituted the laws of the covenant for the perfect government of his people, even the Decalogue, which stood as a glorious constitution, to which all laws were to have recourse. This Decalogue was the laws of the ten commandments, the eternal rule of righteousness. Heb. VIII:10.

The Jewish church was a body political and ecclesiastical, who by the Lord's direction formed a code of national laws, to punish therewith the transgressors of the aforesaid constitution, or eternal rule of right. A Sabbath breaker, a disobedient son were stoned to death! If a man's wife enticed her husband to idolatry, which is a breach of the great law and command, his eye should neither spare nor pity her, but she should die. Who of our gentlemen have revised the Levitical laws, and advised our legislature to adopt such measures here? If involuntary slavery stands, surely involuntary submission to God in all the externals of the Jewish law ought to follow, as the several links of a chain.

The heathen nations were an abominable set of creatures worshipping devils in their different idols, with revelling, drunkenness and obscure ceremonies; and by horrid murders in sacrificing their children, would strive to appease the wrath of their gods! Such creatures were reprobated judicially, lying under eternal damnation in the world to come, except they repented. Those nations clearly saw the invisible things of God in their measure, by things that were seen in the visible creation, and were left without excuse. For they did not like to retain God in their thoughts, or glorify him as God, but became enemies to God - and to his gracious designs. Therefore, thus saith the Lord, "Be ye wise, O kings; take instructions, ye judges of the earth; kiss the Son, who through the loins of David, shall in spite of you all, come to the throne: I will make an everlasting covenant in which all nations shall be blessed, but they refused. Therefore thus saith the Lord God, "Why do the

"leathern rage," (at David or the Messiah)" and the people imagine a vain thing "(as though they could overturn the purposes of Heaven)" the kings of nations combine rulers counsel and conspire against God and his anointed, saying, "let us refuse the government that refuses us our carnal pleasures." Fight on, said the devil, break those bonds in sunder, and cast away those cords of discipline." "Then Jehovah spake in his wrath, and vexed them in his sore displeasure." He smiled at their folly. Thus, he gave the Jews (of whom as concerning the flesh, Christ came) power over the nations to rule them with a rod of iron. But under the glorious gospel institution, it is not so. Psalm II. Christ refused the civil government with the honors of earth. He blends no religious and civil government together, but gathers out all nations into one fold whoever became his willing subjects through the cogent power of the gospel; which gospel is his two edged sword to the consciences of all who will receive the conviction thereof. Moses and his disciples having a zeal suitable to the times, could slay 3,000 of their idolatrous brethren, Exod. XXXII. But Christ and his disciples spare and pray - "Father, forgive". Woe to America, if Moses' disciples were to govern! The Lord's disciples retained the same zeal until the death of their Master. Witness their desire to call for fire from Heaven to consume the Samaritans, as the prophet had before done. And also the night that our Lord was taken, Peter smote a servant of the high priest. But Christ ordered the sword to be put up, and healed the wound. So that we may say with St. Paul, "our weapons are not carnal." The Son of God did not come to destroy lives, but to save. Neither did he come to enslave men's persons, but to preach the great jubilee. Involuntary slavery directly opposes the benevolent purposes of the Christian religion; the Christian religion is the pure undefiled religion, gathering proselytes from every nation into one fold. The Christian, who through the Spirit hath received a divine nature, even the mind of Christ, hath learned of his great master to be meek to his countrymen, neighbors, and brethren, and the inhabitants of the remotest regions as well as of the nearest. He calls no man common or unclean. He is like his father and his master, whose Sun

Shines upon the evil and the good, and who sends rain on the just and the unjust. Remember that "of one blood, God made all nations," Africa not excepted. Where the gospel-light and religion take root, the dark places of the earth cease from their cruelty. The father hath given all flesh to his Son: his bounds are from Sea to Sea, and from the ends of the earth. Therefore, be wise, O Kings of nations; and you rulers of America, be instructed, and break the jaws of the wicked, and take the spoils out of his teeth. Will a man rob God? Ye have robbed him, even this whole nation, in seizing and enslaving the purchase of Christ's blood. We read in the Revelation Chap. XVIII, of selling the souls of men, but it is not left as an example for Christians. Is not America in this respect a Sister to Babylon and Rome there spoken of? When shall our church be purified from Spiritual whoredom, and this species of antiChrist?

The primitive Christians did not support their ministers upon the hire of slaves procured for that purpose. May my fellow laborers of different churches feel what I write, be convicted, by no means of feuded; and no longer support the gracious general gospel by the sweat and blood of the objects of God's mercy and subjects of gospel grace: this hath more the appearance of wolves than shepherds. Yet, I humbly pray, that I may not be looked upon as an enemy to any man, because I tell the truth. I will allow as much as possible for the prejudice of education and former ignorance of blind guides, but now light is come, let us put off the works of darkness. I return to you, my Methodist brethren, whose ministers do not lord it over you; neither are we your hirelings by laying you under the power of a civil process. But the love of Christ constrains us, and let the same love constrain you, my beloved, to carry on our master's honorable cause in the primitive manner to his glory and you and me shall receive our reward, when the Great Shepherd and Bishop shall appear. And let our hearts be gladdened, and our hands strengthened, by clearing away this blood and oppression. O brethren, will you be made clean? When shall it once be? You degrade and wrong the very members of Christ, who takes this wrong as done to himself; but yet, mercifully bearing with you still is ready to forgive, because many of you know not what you do.

Oh! how is Jesus wounded by his friends! Will you open a-fresh his wounded side? Forbear your threats: hold your hand; you will remember those lashes another day with sorrow.

SECTION V

Besides the holy prophets and apostles in their doctrine and holy rule of living, what think ye of the primitive Christians? Do they witness for or against me? "They were all one mind and heart or soul, and called nothing they possessed their own," (how much less their brethren?) "but sold all they had, and divided it amongst their brethren. Can we believe that they at that time held slaves? Sold then among other property? I know we must believe the reverse. If ever they owned any bond-men, you may be sure they freed them instead of selling them. We read many things in church history and go there for many proofs, but we read nothing of slavery amongst them.

There are many mouths open against me, as if I were the only person who ever cried out against the evil practice of Slavery. The British constitution abhors it; Slavery cannot be introduced into England by any foreign law, no, nor have an existence there. The gentlemen who formed our bill of rights call Slavery an inhuman negative. Our government stands on the basis of natural liberty, as the birth-right of all human beings. Our worthy gentlemen in the north begin to abhor it with hatred. I trust some of our Virginians do in their hearts, disapprove of it. Several begin to declare against it. Some (a few) worthy men in our state have liberated their slaves. Several of our worthy members (in our church) have unloosed the heavy burdens, the Lord spare the people in Carolina, who refuse to give the honest Quakers liberty of conscience. I could produce many more weighty testimonies, but I decline; only I must call upon that secret friend of mine in my readers' own breast. What need is there of any further witness to prove a matter so glaring to every man of sentiment?

SECTION VI

'Tis an invariable rule, as touching testimony, that two or three

witnesses shall confirm and establish a truth; but yet under certain restrictions, namely, the witnesses must be reputable characters, and their witness must agree.

Now, my brethren, I stand at your bar, yea I lie, as a servant (not a slave) at your feet; and if you think me worthy to be received as a brother, take me in your arms and press my throbbing heart to yours. Can you deny the authenticity of my testimony against this evil? Search it to the bottom, and acknowledge the strength of it, founded on the attested revelation of Heaven, and on the principles of reason. As touching my own interest in pursuing the destruction of slavery, all men who know me, and what I have done in giving up my little all, must discern that money moves me not, and as to honour, it is most certain I cannot aim at that; witness the false reports and bitter reflections sounding in your ears, concerning me. As to prejudice in favor of any class of people or color, it is rather on your side. I can inform you of an instance that happened lately, whereby I discovered my prejudice: viz. At the Lord's table a few months past, there were several Christian slaves at the last table, and a very discreet white woman (as I thought) amongst them. I afterwards inquired what humble genteel white woman that was among the blacks? They informed me she was a slave. You may be sure it wounded my soul, and I sought out a secret place to weep and bewail my sister; and for some time could not be comforted. At last, I discovered my prejudice in favor of mine own color, and herein do confess my infirmity and prejudice of education. Were I to see my white brethren, with their wives and children in the doleful state of slavery, surely sorrow would overwhelm me. The Lord perfect what is lacking in me, in this thing.

As a servant of the Church, many of you have known me for several years, and my manner of behaving amongst you, especially in my native country, Virginia. I stand at your bar: testify against me. Have not I labored among you, crying against all sin, night and day with many tears? Have I not taught you the same thing in

private, both by precept and example, as well as in public - holiness to the Lord? Say, the clubs have been raised to beat me; once the pointed dagger was presented against me, but GOD protected me by life guard of the daughters of my people. Now my life is threatened; yet I must defend this truth, and hope that my testimony will be received among you, my brethren. Cannot I call for a cloud of witnesses, to declare against such wrong and cruelty, as necessarily follows negro slavery.

SECTION VII

Come now and let us reason together. Lay by all prejudice, confer not with flesh and blood, and we will investigate the substance of what has been said. Believe me, my beloved brethren and countrymen, there is a vast difference between common servitude, and odious manner in which we use and treat these poor people in America, called Slaves. When Christ insists that we must observe his laws, as well as to rely on his gracious power, you fly to Moses for protection, but there is no shelter there. The great jubilee is now come, and all such national curses ought to be removed by all who received Christ. We are not Jews nor Moses' disciples. We must not pass by (under shelter of the Levitical laws) a poor wounded African, but endeavor like the good Samaritan to heal him. Consider again, how Rome is called Babylon (Rev. XVIII) for many transgressions and one of her great crying sins was the odious commerce of the Slave Trade - souls of men, or men who have souls capable of the image of God. Be ye well assured, that so far as Slavery prevails, so far is the community defective in answering the noble purposes of Society. Brethren! do me justice; lay open this evil in its native colors, and surely you will agree that it deserves the abhorrence of every feeling, every good man. However we may be disaffected to the Roman clergy, let this be remembered to their credit, that they used all their influence on their converts to procure the manumission of their slaves, and wonderfully effected it in many places. Had Great Britain reaped no other advantage from the establishment of Christianity, but the abolition of Slavery, this social benefit itself would have been great. They remember how the spirit of industry

revived and how manufacturers and trade flourished when vassalage ceased. But, alas! Did they send the curse of Slavery into America? And do we hear that it still exists in the British islands? Reproachful tale! Good Lord, remove it. Now we have it in our power, let us render these States rich and strong, by recovering to society the poor sons of Africa. I cannot see what we can set our foot upon when we contend for Slavery! Surely not on the Rock - Christ.

A foreigner cannot be imprisoned here by or on the authority of a law existing in his own country, much less enslaved with all his posterity. No person can be committed to prison by a law that is now obsolete or repealed. No cause can be carried by an attorney, on laws not now in existence. When were the Levitical laws, which were instituted for the Jews, adopted by the gospel, and made a part of the glorious gospel - reformation and great year of universal jubiles? You may be certified of the difference between a common servant and a Slave. England abounds with servants, but abhors slavery. Christ took on him the form of a willing servant, but not of an involuntary slave. He has many Serving Servants, of whom I am one, but he has no Slaves. His Servants feel their obligations, and when they have done all, have only done their duty. Rational Servitude is regulated by laws of justice and equity suitable to the State of Servants. But it is not so with us: laws can be instituted for horned cattle or wild deer. Pity can be shewn towards the motherless bleating fawns, but no pity toward poor Slaves! No, hardly so much as one small restraint is laid on the most unfeeling wretch, nor can the silent tears of tender relatives at public sales (loud cries are formed by Slavish fear) reach the hearts of our Christians.

O, thou who heareth the young ravens, pity those who have no comforter. O ye ministers of State, let your clemency bear with me. We once presented a petition, respecting the poor outcasts of men, founded upon the constitution, and at the same time there was another offered in opposition, desiring that the door of mercy should be shut. We will continue to desire that your superior power would assist us in carrying on this labor and justice and love. Many of our worthy citizens mourn to see thousands, men of like passions with themselves, for no just cause, dragging the yoke

of Slavery. You tolerate all the evils which attend it! "O earth, cover not their blood!" Do not our prudent, sensible people shudder, lest one day it should be repaid to our dear children? O let timely repentance and reformation prevent it! I tremble to write what I fear! Were it lawful, I could with my whole family, being renewed by grace, corpses before me; could I think evil would never be removed, but by such a judgment; my Soul meditates terror! Clouds are gathered at a distance; thunders not yet discharged, rumbling, roar from Sinai and Zion! Arbitrary power over the inalienable rights of thousands prevail.

For us to affirm that Slavery harmonizes with the Spirit and religion of Jesus Christ, is - blasphemy! It is so opposite to his glorious, gracious mission, and so flatly contradicts his divine nature and doctrine. Many of our citizens are blinded to the evil of Slavery, by the words, "Servants, be obedient", they conclude there can be no distinction between that and "Slaves be obedient". When the former only yield to serve on condition; but the latter are deprived of liberty, and the privilege of acquiring property, and their work is servial drudgery. Let him that readeth understand. "Art thou called, being a Servant, care not for it," - that is, Rejoice that thou art Christ's free men. Be patient, lest if providence ever opens a way for your freedom, "use it". If any are hired Servants or sovermantened, etc. even if your master is peevish, show the meek, Christian spirit, and adorn your profession. Let none think that religion teaches men to be idle, proud or rebellious. And you, Christian masters, pay up those laborers who reap down your fields. Give them full wages, agreeable to contract, and equal to their labor; and now having become a master to threaten a servant whom he hath to reward, must we suffer our members to cut and strip slaves who labor for nought? St. James charged some professors with the sin of oppression, for holding back the money due to the hired servants, and called it a crying sin., Ch. V, but our Virginians look upon themselves insulted if they come under the character of oppressors, who keep thousands under servile oppression. We ought, according to St. Paul's order, to work with our own hands, or we ought to reward the

lands who labor for us. Thus, we should do as we would be done by. Everyone desires the value of his labor. Each one would with and desire, (if he had been deprived of his natural rights and liberty) to have them restored. Reader! go, and do as thou wouldst be done by; and no longer pass by those miserable objects, trodden underfoot, robbed and wounded, under the plea of your text for the Levitical laws. (which no more concern the matter in debate, than the laws of Germany affect America;) but like a Christian, heal, relieve, and comfort them. Though your forefathers wounded and robbed them, it lies upon you to deliver them. Suppose it should cost you a few mites, the Lord will repay you at the resurrection of the just. Many of our poor slaves are members of Christ's body, as much as we; yea, and joined to the Lord by the same Spirit; and in as much as ye do an act of kindness to one of these, you do it to Christ. O for the love that you bear to Jesus Christ, let his members have their liberty; let his children go, that they may serve him.

If it be a divine precept to feel for those of our brethren who are in bondage, certainly we ought to deliver them, if it be in our power; otherwise, it would be dissimulation to pretend to free part of their burdens. Shall we never cease to pervert the holy Scriptures and deprive our brethren of the most valuable civil privilege on earth, and degrade the most glorious part of the creation, by calling them property, as cattle! Such property is exceeding dangerous to society and by no means conducive to the improvement of manufacturers and commerce; or in any ways serviceable to a virtuous and free people. The benevolent purposes of laws ought not thus to be overturned; terror is fallen on the innocent while those who tempt God, are delivered!

The duty of a Christian to an illiterate heathen, is to love and instruct him, and by all means to strive to bring him to Christ; remembering the hole of the pit, from whence we are all dug. 'Tis a pity we should thus expose ourselves by striving to justify our practice of Negro Slavery, by a former national law which punished the rebellious nations that hated God and his laws. 'Tis a practice, when judiciously investigated, so replete with horror, as to be shocking, even when viewed

as a punishment inflicted upon rebels against God. O, be careful of offense against our great Legislator, Jesus Christ: by enslaving your fellow creatures you virtually submit to conduct and government of our common enemy. No soul can bear two legislators, or be safe without one. O my soul, envy not the oppressor, and choose none of his ways. If defrauding a hired servant, is by the Holy Ghost called oppression and it be said that God will be a swift witness against such, shall I dare to call Negro Slavery by any other name than oppression? Can we suppose that God would destroy a nation or nations, without just cause to do us a pleasure? 'Tis blasphemy! They are beaten, starved and tortured. They are of no name or title, incapable of any judicial process in defense of their natural rights; in short, without remedy. Poor, unfortunate people, deprived of what we esteem better than life itself! They are judged by every man's law, condemned, unheard! We may consider them as dead men, though our country is mostly supported by them. Where is the honest politician who dares to make a stand against what morality condemns? There is an eternal rule of right that runs through every dispensation. I wish I could prevail upon my brethren to treat the topic in a serious light; and with me and many others they would view the odious, bloody system with the utmost horror! Does our constitution condemn the doctrine of non-resistance? I acknowledge that self-preservation is a law of nature, and would justify the hand that should stab a dagger into the heart of a tyrant who was about to deprive him of life and liberty. But as vengeance belongeth to the Lord, he is safest, in my humble opinion, who leaves it in his hands. What shall I say? O Slavery, thou bane of Virginia! Whoever strives to support involuntary slavery, appears to me an enemy to the whole race of mankind; for if Slavery be right, no man ought to murmur at being himself a Vassal, or at seeing his sons and daughters under the yoke! Their blood is spilling, their lives wearing away by hardship. What would life be to me when deprived of liberty, and reduced to wretchedness? Poor people; what pen is able to set forth their corporal and mental sufferings? When the females are first crowded on board, nature teaches them modesty, but in spite of all shew of resentment and all their weak efforts, they are exposed to the brutish,

filthy Sailors. Modesty blushes; noble principles highly resent it! Every virtuous patron with her virgin daughters, must assist me with all their perfect resentment. Yea, they certainly cannot bear the thought! Men whose grace is not yet sufficient to balance their noble resentment must feel their blood rise at such images; 'tis enough to make such a man detest and abhor the human species, thus made up of victims and executioners! And were there no hope of amendment of such a constitution, they would wish in heart for an annihilation of the human species. "If there be a religion" (said a gentleman) "that is now in existence, which even by silence tolerates slavery, its pastors deserve to be massacred under the ruins of their altars." You know, although you profess to be lovers of Jesus and his creature, and that you ought not to have the faith or religion of Christ with respect of persons, yet your slaves are huddled together, male and female, without regard to sex or modesty - as cattle in the pen! Many of those who are nearly grown, yea, quite grown are daily before your eyes, half naked; the young, as naked as when they came into this miserable world! I wonder the delicacy of our female sex does not oblige them to blush and shudder; What taste are you off? O, if it was Miss Polly or Miss Nancy who was to be thus exposed, who could brook it? Surely, if you would give them their liberty, you might do better than this for soul and body. "They are so foolish, theivesh and poor, yea, idle, that I cannot perceive they would be any better off." Everybody knows, reward only sweetens labor. As for their ignorance, it is surely your shame and sin, that they have received so shocking an education. Your children would have been as foolish, had they been raised after the same manner. Disgrace and want have brought them to be thieves. You say, "They are poor and have nothing to begin upon, how can they live, if free?" This objection is stronger than all. They are the poorest people that ever mine eyes saw. You shall take every rag of clothing that is on a thousand and put them in the road as free plunder, and hardly a free-man would alight from his horse to pick them up! But why such poverty? Where is all their labor that you have got? Your objections make your injustice only the more glaring.

God are the cause of their poverty. Will you rob a man of his all, and then out of pity make a slave of him, because he has nothing to begin upon? Perhaps the grand objection lies here, "What shall we do?" Only let a gradual emancipation commence, from the pure love of God and man in our Christian brethren, and that glorious example will influence the civil powers. Reward them for their labor; encourage good behavior, subject them to your laws; let them have interest to study and our country will not want hands to till the earth with comfort; their minds will be no longer so contracted; the activity of the magistrates will suppress flagitiousness of white and black, the natural genius of the people will soon appear. There will be less perhaps of that luxurious weed, tobacco, and more of that blessed grain which is the staff of human life! There will be no slaves, but many good servants; more farmers, and fewer speculators. More agriculture and less idleness; cowhide whips will be converted into shoes and upstart slave-drivers will grasp the handle of the plough; manufacturers will be carried on to perfection; every man will then be bound to his own country by the ties of interest and gratitude; and our nation will become the mart of nations and the garden of the Lord. Then the hands of faithful ministers who are not seeking filthy lucre, will be lifted up, while they cry, "Arise, shine, for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee." The faith and the love of the Lord's people shall then be spoken of through the world. But the Spirit that hardeneth Pharaoh's heart still prevails. We demand, their liberty; or rather, entreat. You cry in your heart, this is not sent from God, you take too much upon you; as if honesty, mercy, and the relative duties did not concern us; as if the captive's groans and complaints could make no impression upon our hearts; Your cry is: "Ye are idle". I say, if you resolve to hold fast your iniquity, look back on the marks of God's displeasure in all ages, upon nations who thus treated their fellow creatures! God first calls, then warns; and then visits! For this is certainly a crying sin! The Gospel for a long time has been propagated in America, even by zealous, Spiritual men; and societies have been raised which certainly enjoyed the consolations of the

Spirit. Light and liberty are now come. Therefore, while we have opportunity, let us do good unto all men. Several have desired our rulers to repeal the act of liberation, but I hope they will be wiser, than to shut the door that tolerates mercy, lest God shut the door of mercy against them eternally. "There are several of our brethren who have departed this life happily resigned, who left their people in bondage, when the laws gave power to liberate." True it is, that several have departed in this manner; but this I know, that not every one that saith Lord, Lord, or professes to be happy, and feels some comfort, shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven. These things we will leave to God; if he winks at their ignorance arising from the powerful prejudice of education, happy are they. I know light rejected, brings condemnation; wherever their departed souls are, God knoweth. Perhaps if you with your eyes opened, venture upon their scandalous and dangerous examples who gave away their slaves by will, as they left the world, it may plunge your souls into an eternal hell! Beware what you do, and whose examples you follow. Look for the holiest examples, if you wish to go safe. Phil. III:17. Suppose that your slaves were to approach the room, when you were about to make your last will; and say, "Master, you now expect to die; we now begin to see that we have been wronged by being held in slavery; your treatment of us has been so tolerable that we have patiently born it; but we humbly beseech you to deliver us from the hands of others; for the Lord's sake, before you die, remember us and ours forever", could you raise your weak and trembling hand, and lay it on your beating heart, and with your stammering tongue say, "My friends, I do you no wrong. Meet me at judgment, and there testify against me, if I have defrauded any of you, I have not only believed, but observed the holy, general gospel rules, whatsoever things were honest, just and equal, true, pure, lovely, and of good report among the holy, primitive saints, I am now about to make my last will and testament, which last work shall follow me to judgment, where God shall judge his people, as I would that you should do to me any my posterity forever, had you the same authority. I now have done, therefore, feeling my conscience void of offense toward God and man,

Particularly towards you, poor murmuring, discontented people, I die in peace; Lord Jesus, receive my Spirit! Reader, how dost thou feel?" "If it was a general thing through the states, I should have no objection to let my Slaves go." If it be right, you should speedily do what your hand findeth to do; but if emancipation be wrong, never follow the multitude to do evil. What do such lame excuses indicate, but a species of the pride of life, fearing your children will appear inferior to others? You who feel not what I write, want true poverty of spirit as well as love; you have no more reason to hope you are Christians, than that you are arch-Angels. Indeed, you have unspeakable reason to doubt your sincerity; you are tinctured with hypocrisy in the sight of him who searches the secrets of all hearts. You do but flatter with your lips, when you say, "thy will be done." You know it is not altogether right, but as you believe at times that you feel real comfort, because the blessed Spirit has not departed, you conclude all is well; not feeling your soul under the condemnation of the law, you resist the light, and try to be content with as much religion as will just keep your soul (as you suppose) out of hell. This is nothing but self-love or self interest. Interest is the motive in keeping of them. But if you believed it would destroy your soul, and shut you out of endless rest, you would give them up. So you may see, it is not from any noble principle, from any love to Christ or his cause, that you act thus. You have as much reason to believe that your love to the adorable Jesus is beyond that which his virgin mother, who bore him, ever felt towards him, as to believe you love him better than yourselves.

A man quite illiterate, might with as much propriety believe he was properly qualified for the place of the President of America, as you or any of you (who feel sensibly convicted by what he is here laid down) that you are qualified for the kingdom of Heaven. Again, there is as much reason to expect that children can obtain a complete education without using the proper means, as that Christians can find out the perfect will of God concerning them, and be cleansed by the blood of the covenant from all filthiness of flesh and Spirit, while they draw back from the light, harden their troubled consciences, disobey their teachers, and daily grieve the

Internal Spirit! You may as well conclude that a young man who lives an intemperate life, will never feel the sad effects of his bad-spent hours, because they do not come at once upon him and break up his constitution; or that the consumption will never kill, because it is slow in its motions; as believe (when you have a conviction of the iniquity of Negro Slavery) that you will obstinately hold your integrity to the end! God indeed may bear with you for a while as he did with obstinate, murmuring Israel, who grieved the souls of their leaders.

Hearken, my beloved, I fear in time your grace or good or the monstrous riddle will be revealed to me, viz., oppression and injustice shall scale the mount of God. From the dreadful prejudice of education, (you being brought up oppressors from your childhood from the example of your parents), you were taught to command with rigor, threaten and despise. You conclude, perhaps, that it is your driver who is in fault, and what your tender feelings would bleed to do yourselves, you set a wicked unfeeling wretch to do for you, even stripping off the flesh with small cords, and gashing it with cow-skins and switches, till the blood trickles down to their heels! Let not my beloved brethren behold me as an enemy because I tell them the truth. My conscience bears me witness in the Holy Ghost this moment, while I secretly appeal to the Searcher of Hearts, that I love you; yea, your Souls are more to me than honor, ease or all the world. My heart's desire and prayer to God is, that your souls may be saved. For this I spend my all, but you grieve me sorely, because you keep my brethren in bondage. Perhaps, for my love to mankind, you can speak lightly of one who labors in the word and doctrine. Many of you have been quickened through my instrumentality, who now perhaps can mention my name with contempt, and strengthen the hands of my persecutors. The time has been that my name (as unworthy as it is) was mentioned with respect. If you could even have spared your eyes, I might have had them. Yet one thing comforts me; I can appeal to my brethren and sisters with whom I have had sweet communion in Christ how holy in behavior and conversation I have behaved myself! How tender I have been with all who behaved well before me. Prove all things, before you condemn. Try the point in hand, by the

standard of justice and equity; try it by the principles of mercy and love; try it by the rule of reason, and always observe that no process can be just unless it be reasonable. Try it by the natural rights of mankind! Try it by the affinity of nature, Acts Ch. XVII - 26. Try it by human feelings; try it by our own constitution, founded on the natural rights of mankind; try it by heathen honesty, and in all these you will be cast. Consider well what I have written; bear with my plainness. Look over my weakness and low manner of arguing; for if no other man will stoop to answer such low objections I must and have; as to the substance of these assertions in respect to their pure truth - I challenge every critic on earth. Let Jesus stand on my right hand, and I believe the very devil himself would not tell me to my fact that Slavery is just in the sight of God! Distant thunders have threatened me from the devil's synagogue. Hard looks from some of my beloved Methodist brethren have often brought my Spirit low, yet none of these things make me desert the truth; neither count I my life too dear, so that I lose it as a patient martyr for the sake of truth. Brethren, you have a new name; be uniform and show the new nature.

Climb this one mountain, brethren, and perhaps you may never meet with so great a one, between this and the Holy Land. Come, my beloved, let us proclaim the great jubilee! God will provide for your dear children and also for Hagar and her son! Your poor blacks will (several of them) remain with you as hired servants for a season, perhaps for life. The young ones will not be out of your family for many years. Only break the yoke of oppression, and treat them as your fellow-creatures; instruct them, and give them part of their toil. If your present situation is such that you cannot liberate your captives without defrauding your creditors or reducing your family into deep distress; acknowledge the wrong detention, converse with your dear preachers who feel for you, and emancipate them in a more gradual manner; and we shall rejoice to see your sincerity, and acknowledge you as dear brethren in Christ. Brethren, have faith in God. Prove him with your free-will offering, before it is extorted from you by civil authority; a blot which time would

not wipe away from the church! Some I hope are in the Spirit of liberty, whose fruits are not yet seen. O children, you are the cause of your fathers' bequesting as slaves the purchase of Christ's blood. O fall on your knees at their bedsides, and entreat them to run no risk for you, lest the Holy Ghost have them; lest by giving away God's people, they excommunicate themselves from the church, when they enter into eternity; lest the unjust man's hope perish at the giving up of the ghost, and he that refused the light, sink into eternal darkness. There perhaps they will curse a wife that opposed them, and children who overcame them, and feel the oppressive yoke of the merciless devil to eternity! I want you, my sister, and you the sweet babes of a loving parent, have no hand in damning the soul of my brother. What shall I say? Time fails me, but before I drop my pen and commend my weak endeavors to the blessing of God, let me address myself to the preachers of the gospel. Regular soldiers of Christ, arise and put your armor on! Help us, ye sons of liberty; send up your daily prayers. Hold up our hands, whilst we meet the sons of night who face damnation, as if they would take hell by violence, and conquer the king of the bottomless pit, and enslave all its fiery inhabitants. I dread your frowns more than all their threatnings. Some of them are under violent temptations to withdraw from us, and venture eternal for temporal things. The Lord knows, they are in great danger of falling short of the promises left them; Preach, and pray, and converse with them in love. You will lose esteem, but may save many a soul. He that seeks only the praise of God looks upon applause as air. Perhaps you will be permitted to suffer sometimes for food or raiment which you know is all we ask for. But he that only seeks the interest of Christ, regards none of those things. To save souls is our work, and God is our portion forever. Like Moses, let us lay down our honor at the feet of Jesus, and venture on the wrath of the wicked, and be willing to suffer affliction with the despised people of God. Let us ransack the sweet bowels of Christ for arguments. Let us venture nearer to God through Christ than ever we did. His arm is not shortened. Let us persuade the Lord to conquer our people by the power of religion, and not to

give them up to the curse of judicial blindness. Let us never distrust the Almighty. Lay all your shoulders to the mountains of slavery. I believe I am leaning now on the main pillars on which it stands. If God would give me power, I would bow till my heart broke, so it could be to the destruction of this bloody oppression. I would even die as Samson did! But O, how weak I feel my faith at times; yet, at other times yea, even now, I have scarcely a doubt. Let us with all love and Christian prudence push on; some we need not fear, will every year be delivered, and this labor of love shall meet its reward at the restitution of the just. Therefore, let us not suffer ourselves to be overcome in this glorious work, nor flee as timorous birds to the distant mountains. The laws of heaven and earth are on our side; call upon the dear local preachers to fly to our assistance; the people look much at them. O that they may consider that an error in practice is as dangerous to souls as false doctrine. How can they see their own dear brethren in need, and shut up the bowels of their compassion? O that their silence may no longer add to my affliction. David was not suffered to build the temple because of blood; and shall we build up Zion with blood? I perfectly hate the gain of oppression, and yet we must needs go out of our country to get clear of it. You can cope with all their groveling objections to liberty, when you consider the justice of the cause and the precepts of the gospel. Help, dear servants of the Most High, to open the way of Salvation and remember that eternal salvation is promised only to those who believe and obey. Those who reject our counsel, will certainly find sooner or later that it is rejecting the counsel of the Lord against themselves! A certain person in our church lately told me that her soul had nearly departed from God, in resisting the light in this respect. O dear local brethren, help in this good work. Beware of a separation from us, unless you wish to join the enemy in doing that which he cannot do, unless some of us assist him. If you love God, your neighbors, families and country; if you regard the unborn generations, strive together with us for the itinerant plan, while it is called "today." You, my dear preachers and members of our society, who have made a willing sacrifice for the gospel sake - you I love with

pure heart, fervently. Fear not; the Lord will provide; he will not leave or forsake you in distress. I have been young, and now am old, but never saw the just man forsaken, or his children begging their bread. Your Father knows what you want. Prudently use the means, and never be anxiously distressed for tomorrow. God can restore what the war, drought and insects have destroyed. God bless you with the fatness of heaven! I bless you in the name of the Lord. Your temporal and eternal concerns shall lie near my heart. Had I only one sixpence, and your children needed it, freely would I divide it. "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy." God hath said it, and he cannot lie. I behold the image of your heavenly Father in you, and I love it. You hate the gain of oppression. When devouring, everlasting burning raises the lamentable cry of the impenitent sinners and hypocrites, you shall dwell in the mountain of rocks; bread shall be given you; your waters shall not fail; you shall see the King in his beauty, and behold the new Jerusalem, and the gates open to receive a righteous people who have kept and obeyed the truth, instead of trusting to a refuge of lies. Stand fast, my dear people; we live, if you stand fast. This is feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, in the highest sense. The blessing of them who were ready to perish, will daily fall upon you. The unborn race of the poor blacks will bless the remembrance of you. Thousands will stand around you at the last day, praising God for the grace given you. Your seed shall inherit the earth, while proud oppressors will be cut off. Your souls are knit to mine, I have you always in mine heart, to love and die with you. Yet let us remember that after we have done all, we are poor unprofitable servants; we have only done our duty, and have cause to mourn at our shortcomings. We have reason to repent of the long and wrong detention of our slaves. Our business is not only to free them, but to do all we can, respecting their souls and bodies. Our land is still a field of blood! Join your fervent prayers with mine. O dear Jesus, let beams dart from thy benevolent eyes into the hearts of our countrymen and soften their spirits, disperse, dispel the thick gloomy cloud of errors, lest all the innocent blood of those people fall from first to last

upon this generation!

We are pained at small matter: we strain at gnats, while camels choke us not. O Lord, we confess our sins, and the sins of our forefathers; but, O merciful God, cast us not away from thy presence, neither take thy Holy Spirit from us; Turn us, O God, and we shall be turned. Save us from wicked and unreasonable men. Hasten the time of deliverance. O Almighty Goodness, hear the groans of my poor brethren; behold, their blood spilling like water! How long will the bowels of a tender bear it? O let infinite mercy regard our cries: yield, O, yield, dear Jesus, to point out some gracious way for their deliverance. Gird on thy Spiritual sword, Almighty Jesus, and let celestial beams of light mingle with divine love, dart into the hearts of our dear people! Triumph gloriously, O Prince of Love and Peace, over all our stubborn hearts! O thou desire of all nations, remember poor Africa, and her miserable sons in America! Moses' disciples chastised thy enemies with rods, but Christians chastise thy friends with scorpions! Thy truth suffers, Lord Jesus, and so do thy creatures; yea, many of thy disciples. O Eternal Light, that didst strike down Saul, beam into our people's hearts, and let them find they are afflicting thee! O Almighty Goodness, forgive, for surely they do not yet rightly know what they do! I expect but little thanks from man for this labor of love; but if it may be seriously read over once or twice; and if the public will pardon my freedom in propagating the truth in the love of it; and believe that my sorrowful soul is clear of bitterness - but above all, if God be glorified, the poor slaves liberated, and the souls of my brethren saved, I shall not lose my labor; but ascribe all the praise and honor to God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost forever and ever.

F I N I S

In this same volume there is also published an ESSAY on Negro Slavery - by another hand.

There are twelve pages of this essay, and it is signed by "Othello".

Maryland, May 23, 1788.

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